

Experiential education methods in public administration

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Abstract: Experiential education is a widely used and highly effective teaching method. Proponents argue that experiential education does not replace traditional teaching methods but adds valuable skills, perspectives, and a broader understanding of the relationship between theory and practice. This method is commonly applied in scientific fields such as geography, biology, medicine, physics, as well as sociology, anthropology, and communication. Experiential learning also includes several specific forms, such as service learning, situated learning, action learning, and adventure learning, with the choice of approach often determined by the teacher and the field of study.

Public administration, as we know, differs significantly from these scientific fields, particularly in areas where students must engage with legislation and policy. In this context, my research questions are as follows: How do public administration faculties incorporate experiential education into their curricula? What specific activities and methods are used? To explore this, I analyzed the websites and social media pages of leading public administration faculties worldwide.

The second research question examines how public administration students respond to various experiential learning methods. To address this, I distributed questionnaires among students and analyzed the responses. The activities and methods under investigation include internships, externships, case studies, simulations, institutional visits, and living labs.

In my opinion, experiential education provides a dynamic approach to bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application, even in fields like public administration. By incorporating activities such as internships, simulations, and case studies, students gain a deeper understanding of real-world challenges and complexities. This research highlights both the methods used by public administration faculties and the positive reception of these methods among students. Moving forward, further studies could explore how these practices impact students' professional readiness and adaptability in their future careers.